No.05

Around this time, the Empire had fallen into chaos.
Everywhere outside the capital was infested with monsters.
And their numbers only increased.
People could no longer travel outside the barriers.
Scholars searched for the cause of the outbreak, but reached no conclusions.
A few days ago, one city, which was supposedly protected by a barrier, had just collapsed, causing an unbelievable amount of damage.
One month ago, a state of emergency was declared throughout the entire empire.

TEMZA?
I'VE NEVER HEARD OF IT BEFORE. WHERE IS IT?
IT'S IN THE DESERT REGION OF DESIER.
THE DESERT? THAT'S NORTH OF NORDO-POLICA, RIGHT?
Gaiman
THERE ARE PEOPLE IN THE DESERT OUTSIDE OF MANTAIC?
Samaras

MORE IMPORTANT THAN THAT ASPIO PLACE?
IT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE HEARD OF IT, TOO. THE EMPIRE'S MOST IMPORTANT RESEARCH FACILITY IS LOCATED THERE.
AS YOU KNOW, THE RATE OF MONSTER APPEARANCES RECENTLY HAS REACHED ABNORMAL LEVELS.
OUR TASK IS TO ASSIST THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE IN PROTECTING THE FACILITY.
REGARDLESS, WE DON'T HAVE TIME. BEGIN PREPARATIONS IMMEDIATELY!
YES, SIR!
JUST WHEN THE SITUATION AT THE CAPITAL HAS CALMED DOWN DUE TO HUNTING EFFORTS AND DEIDON HOLD'S FORTIFICATIONS, NOW WE'RE OFF TO DESIER...
LOOKS LIKE WE GOT STUCK WITH A JOB NO ONE ELSE WANTS TO DO.
Hiethum

Desert Region of Desier
Crag of Mt. Temza
Why the hell is there... pant
a town deep in the mountains pant ...
at the edge of a pant gasp desert...
MAYBE THAT'S JUST WHERE THEIR BARRIER BLASTIA WAS?
HANG IN THERE DAMURON, WE MADE IT THIS FAR UP ALREADY. WE SHOULD SEE IT SOON.

ANYWAY, I CAN'T BELIEVE WE ALREADY LOST HALF OF THE 140 PEOPLE DEPLOYED FROM THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE BEFORE WE EVEN GOT THIS FAR.
IT'S BECAUSE WE GOT AMBUSHED BY MONSTERS AT SEA.
HAH...
NOTICE HOW THE ONES THAT RETREATED AT SEA WERE ALL FROM THE NOBLE FORCES.
THAT WAS DEFINITELY STRANGE... THOUGH WE DID HAVE OUR GUARD DOWN. MONSTERS DON'T USUALLY APPEAR IN THE OPEN SEA.
WELL, ALL THOSE GUYS HAD WERE THEIR TITLES AND PRIVILEGES. THEY HAD PRETTY MUCH NO EXPERIENCE IN BATTLE, SO IT'S NO REAL LOSS IN FIGHTING POWER FOR US.

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HM?
THERE IT IS.
SO THAT'S... TEMZA, HUH....

HAS NO BARRIER...
HUH...? SOME-THING FEELS WEIRD...
THE CITY...
!
IS THIS THE FIRST TIME YOU'VE SEEN OUR BUILDINGS?

OH... I'D HEARD RUMOURS THAT THERE WAS A CITY OF ONLY KRITYA, BUT I DIDN'T THINK IT WAS HERE.
THE KRITYA
I WONDER WHAT'S GOING ON?
WHAT!? WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS!?
Representative of the Expeditionary Forces
Rivites

... THE RESEARCH FACILITY ISN'T HERE.
WHAT IS IT?
ARE YOU SERIOUS... WHY THE HELL DID WE COME HERE THEN....
WHAT!? THEN WHERE IS IT!?
AT THE BOTTOM OF THE MOUNTAIN.
WELL, WE CAN IMAGINE WE CAME UP ALL THIS WAY TO ENJOY THE VIEW.
THE CAPTAIN AND THE GUARD AT THE BOTTOM OF THE MOUNTAIN WERE ARGUING EARLIER. I GUESS HE GOT THE WRONG DIRECTIONS
I GUESS ...
they're still at it...

FOR NOW WE'LL REST HERE. WE'LL HEAD BACK DOWN TOMORROW MORNING.
UNDER-STOOD.
It just feels weird, not having a barrier.

Who'da thought there'd be a city,
that has never used blastia since ancient times?
From what the Kritya say, they don't have any problems living without blastia...
I can't imagine ...
Should I go back now?
Well,
Even monsters would have a hell of a time gettin' up here. I suppose they can do without a barrier.
HM?

AH,
CASEY ...?
WHAT IS SHE DOING OUTSIDE THIS LATE ...?

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ズルミ
THAT'S RIGHT... I FORGOT SHE HAS SOME LOVER WITHIN THE PLATOON....
HAVING TO MEET UP LIKE THIS...
THINGS MUST BE COMPLICATED.
I WONDER WHAT IT FEELS LIKE- NOT BEING ABLE TO SPEAK WITH THE ONE YOU LOVE, WHO SHOULD ALWAYS BE BY YOUR SIDE, DURING THESE DANGEROUS TIMES...
AS A MEMBER OF THE PLATOON, CASEY HAS ALWAYS BEEN DISCIPLINED.

I WONDER IF ANY-BODY ELSE KNOWS...
...
ASIDE FROM THAT GUY WHO SENDS HER FLOWERS, I DON'T KNOW WHO ELSE IN OUR 50-MAN PLATOON IT COULD BE.
.....
.....
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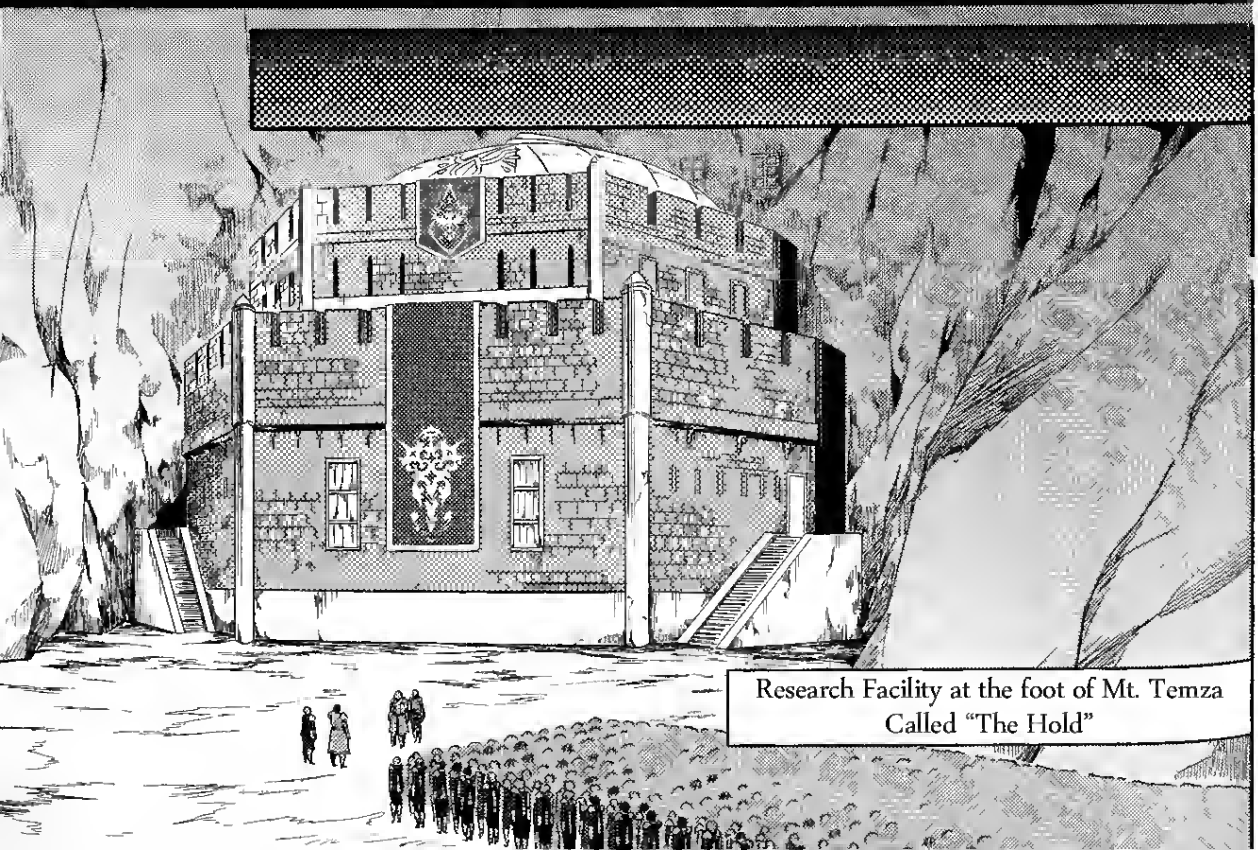
THAT ISN'T SUPPOSED TO BE WHAT I'M HERE FOR.
Get Real Damuron, you dumb-ass.

I can't ask for everything all at once.
I should be satisfied with what I can get now.


Research Facility at the foot of Mt. Temza
Called "The Hold"

WELCOME, EXPEDITIONARY TROOPS! YOU MUST BE EXHAUSTED FROM THE LONG TRIP.
Commander of the Hold's Defenses
WE ARRIVED HERE YESTERDAY, BUT YOUR GUARD SENT US ON A FOOL'S ERRAND UP THE MOUNTAIN!
IT SEEMS WE MADE QUITE THE MISTAKE. WHAT A DISASTOR...
WHAT ...!?
THERE THEY GO WITH THIS NONSENSE ...
yawn ...
you see ...
.....

NOT ONLY THAT, BUT I SEE QUITE A LOT OF COMMONERS MIXED IN THERE.
WELL... IF WE HADN'T BEEN ATTACKED BY SUCH A LARGE PACK OF MONSTERS AT SEA...
BY THE WAY, WE ASKED FOR REINFORCEMENTS TO DEFEND THE HOLD, BUT THIS LOOKS LIKE A PRETTY MEAGER FORCE.
SIR RIVITES, I GET THE FEELING YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION HERE.
WHAT ARE YOU...
IN SUCH CRITICAL TIMES CONCERNING MATTERS OF LIFE OR DEATH, WE HUMANS CANNOT AFFORD TO FIGHT AMONGST EACH OTHER.

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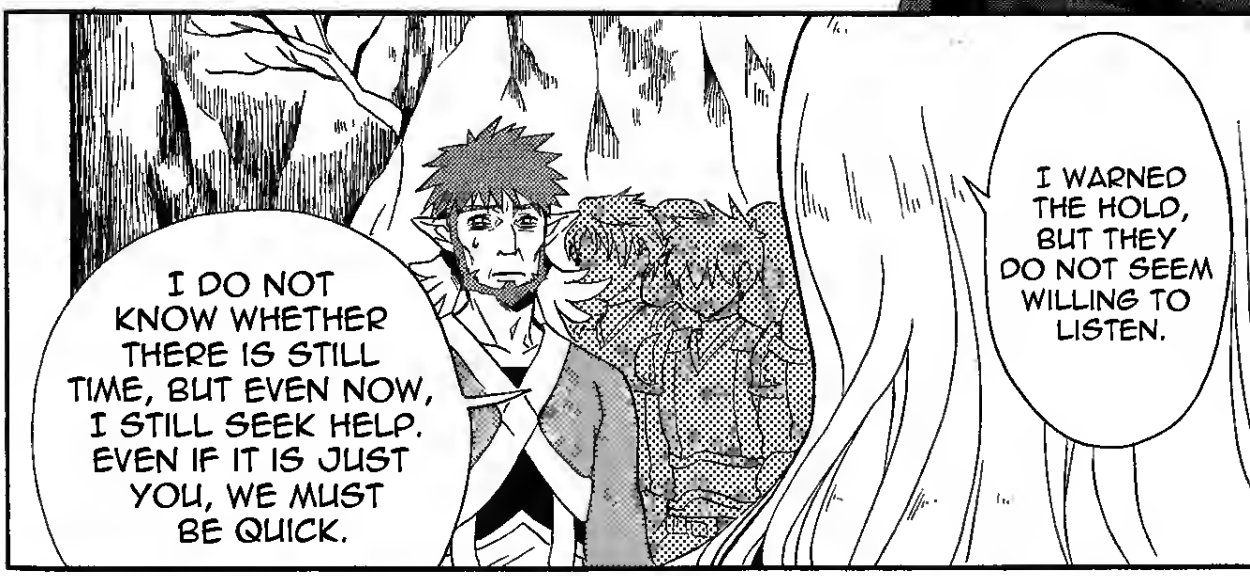
DUKE PANTAREI. MANY PEOPLE DON'T KNOW HIM, BUT HE'S A HIGH-RANKING NOBLE.
WHO?
IT'S DUKE... I DIDN'T EXPECT HIM TO COME HERE.

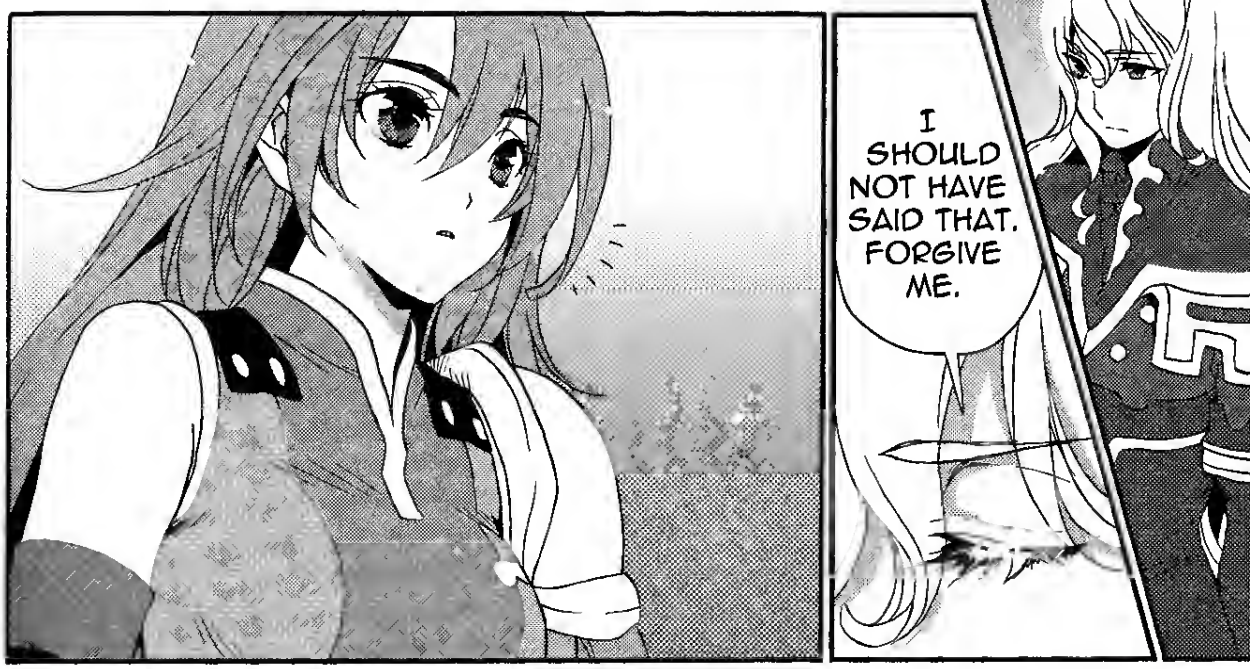
I HEARD THAT HIS BLOOD-LINE IS CONNECTED EVEN TO THE ROYAL FAMILY.
BUT HE'S THE LAST SURVIVING MEMBER.
AND APPARENTLY HE WAS ONCE AN IMPERIAL KNIGHT, TOO.
EVEN AFTER HE QUIT, ALEXEI TRIES TO GET HIM TO RETURN EVERY NOW AND THEN, BUT HE NEVER RESPONDS.
HE STILL DROPS BY AT PLACES AND HELPS OUT, THOUGH, IT SEEMS.
HEY. HE'S COMING OVER HERE.
WOW... HM?

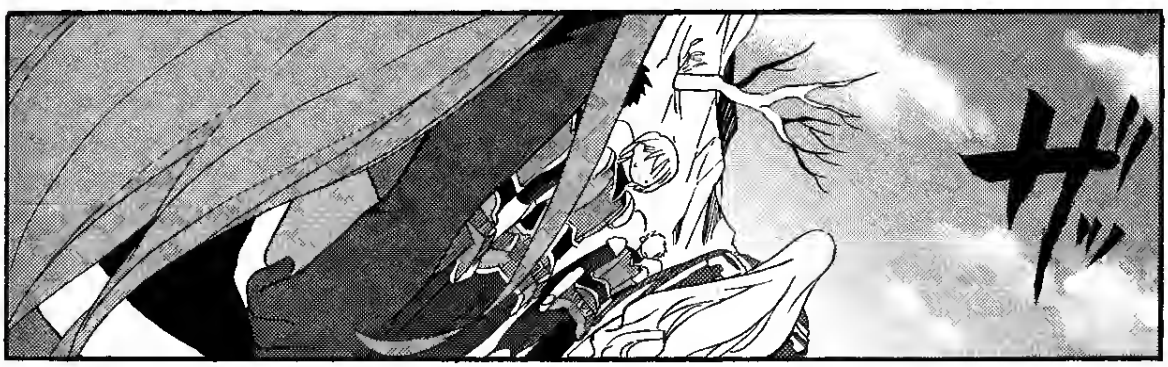
I'VE RECEIVED WORD THAT A DISASTER IS COMING HERE SOON.
YOU'RE... LEAVING HERE, AREN'T YOU?
THAT GUY... HE CAME ALONG WITH US FROM TEMZA, BECAUSE HE HAD BUSINESS TO TAKE CARE OF AT THE HOLD. "HERMES," WAS IT?


I WARNED THE HOLD, BUT THEY DO NOT SEEM WILLING TO LISTEN.
I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER THERE IS STILL TIME, BUT EVEN NOW, I STILL SEEK HELP. EVEN IF IT IS JUST YOU, WE MUST BE QUICK.

I... WILL NOT ALLOW IT.
.... I SEE
TURN

YOU ALL... ARE HUMAN KNIGHTS, TOO?
THIS IS THE CASEY PLATOON OF THE IMPERIAL KNIGHTS, SIR.
I WOULD ADVISE YOU LEAVE THIS AREA, IF POSSIBLE. THE SOONER THE BETTER.
THANK YOU, SIR DUKE, FOR YOUR WARNING.
HOWEVER, WE WOULD NEVER BETRAY THE TRUST OF THOSE WHO COMMAND US.


I SHOULD NOT HAVE SAID THAT. FORGIVE ME.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JUST DROP BY TO SAY SOME WEIRD THINGS AND THEN LEAVE, HUH?
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?

BEEP
!?
Control Room of The Hold
BEEP
WH-WHAT IS THIS?
COMMANDER! THE FOURTH WAVE IS HERE! IT'S THE BIGGEST PACK SO FAR.
BEEP
HMM, I THOUGHT IT WOULD TAKE A LITTLE WHILE LONGER.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN...
SIR RIVITES, I KNOW WHAT I SAID EARLIER, BUT TO BE HONEST, WE DON'T REALLY NEED REIN-FORCEMENTS.
IT'S TIME TO SHOW YOU THE POWER OF THE HOLD.
WHAT THE .....? WHAT'S HAPPENING?
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